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## CARDS.

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### CHAPTER XII.



He came up and seized her as she sank down.

"We are too mistrustful and suspicious," replied the father as he looked from the wagons, still in sight, to the renegades searching the trail. "No one would dare molest us with the camp only a few miles away, and the man will be back with the pins before sundown anyhow."

He spoke thus to encourage himself as well as his wife and daughter, but neither of the three felt any less anxious. The settler looked to the west to see that it was in order, removed the bridles from the horses that they might feed while he waited and then stood on the alert for what might happen.

The sun was only a handbreadth above the horizon when the three renegades returned to the wagon and exhibited one of the pins, which they claimed was found a full mile away. A pry was now got in position, the heavy body of the wagon raised so that the wheels could be slipped on the axle-tree and then one wheel was made secure.

The settler and his family watched the three men closely while they worked, but they seemed intent only on helping the people out of their trouble.

"We may be rough in looks and bad in spots," exclaimed Bob as he wiped the sweat from his forehead with his buckskin sleeve, "but we ain't mean 'nuff to abandon a lone family to the tomahawks of the Indians."

"It is very brave and generous on your part, and I thank you a thousand times over," replied Brown. "I wouldn't have believed that the train people would act so selfishly."

"I reckon we've been parceled out as the worst of the lot, but that don't make us so. I don't claim we are saints, but I do say that when the pinch comes we can be depended on as white men. There comes Pete, and I reckon your troubles are about over."

It was dusk now, and the man called Pete was not seen until within a few rods of the wagon. He dismounted on coming up, handed Brown a couple of linchpins and said the train had gone into camp at the river. Brown walked to the wheel which needed the pin and was placing it in position when a sudden great light flashed before his eyes and he sank to the ground in a heap, having been struck on the head with an ax which one of the men pulled from the wagon.

While the women had been nervous and anxious, the arrival of the man with the pins seemed an act of good faith, and they were congratulating themselves on soon rejoining the train when Bob sprang up in front of them, seized one with either hand and said:

"Come out of this! We've got business with you!"

"Daniel—father!" shrieked mother and daughter, but there was a laugh from all the men, and Bob pulled the women to the ground with the leering remark: "Daniel has got particular business on hand just now, and he begs you will excuse him!"

For a moment the women were helpless with surprise and fear. They saw the body of husband and father stretched on the sod, and both realized that he had been struck down by the renegades. As they stood trembling and helpless two of the men began hitching the

horses to the wagon, a third was busy robbing the dead, while the fourth looked to the wheels to see if all was right.

Brave men and women think fast and plan quickly. When life is in peril one must not give way to feelings of grief.

Both women knew that murder had been done, and both fully realized the plot of the renegades, but after the first shock of surprise and the first moment of weakness their courage returned.

"Run!"

It was the mother who whispered the word as she noticed that all the men were busy for the moment.

They sprang away together, but separated almost at once, and were hidden by the darkness before being missed.

"Jack, you stay by the horses—the rest come along!" shouted Bob, and neither woman was a hundred yards away when pursuit began.

The mother bore to the right, the daughter to the left. The mother made a half circle to come back toward the wagon on the opposite side from which she had started, but the daughter ran straight away. Hidden by the darkness and having the advantage of the start, she would have escaped but for accident. As she ran she stepped on a stone and twisted her ankle until the pain made her cry out.

That cry located the girl for one of the renegades who was rushing hither and yon at random, and he came up and seized her as she sank down, helpless to bear a pound's weight on the injured limb. The search ended here.

"Let the old one go," said Bob as Lizzie was carried back to the wagon. "She's headed back for Nebraska, and if the wolves don't pick her bones before daylight the Indians are sure to come across her. Now let's be off at once."

The team was all ready to move, and the route had been decided on in advance. They were to bend to the left, cross the south fork higher up and then enter the Hills between the foothills and the mountains themselves.

Nature makes her first effort to form mountains a mile or so from where the real mountain is to be heaved up. The ground is thrown up into foothills, which are like an abatis in front of a breastwork. Weary for the moment with this effort nature creates a long, narrow valley, rich in springs and sweet grasses, and beyond that builds up the grim and frowning mountains. These valleys are so numerous and bend and angle so often that they furnish secure hiding places for parties who desire to escape observation.

Lizzie did not ask after her father. She realized that the villains had made him their first victim. Her mother, as she knew, was a wanderer on the plains. As for herself, she was so overwhelmed for the first quarter of an hour that she could not speak. Bob rode beside her and guided the horses, while the others rode on ahead and on the flanks.

"Needn't be afraid of me, honey," said the leader as he put a hand on the girl's shoulder; "I ain't bad. I'm the best feller in the country unless I'm riled. We wanted the wagon and we wanted you, but you've tumbled into good hands, my gal—best hands in the world."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

### A Curious Walking Stick.

A Cartersville, Ga., man is the owner of a curiosity in the shape of a walking stick. It is of buckeye wood and is literally covered with inscriptions incident to the Harrison and Tyler campaign. It is said to contain a history of Harrison's life, a list of the members of his cabinet, with cuts of a log cabin and surrounding grounds and names of numerous of Harrison's officials.

### A POSTOFFICE AT HOME.

Letters Posted and Stamps Bought Without Leaving the House.

Two thousand letter boxes a day will be turned out by a factory at Norristown, Pa., which begins December 1 to manufacture those articles for the private use of house holders all over the Union. They are designed for attachment to the doors of dwellings and other buildings.

A novelty is supplied in these devices by the introduction of an arrangement which enables every person having a private box to mail his own letters, newspapers and packages without going out of his dwelling. At the same time he can purchase stamps and stamped envelopes in any quantities he desires without leaving his house.

Let it be supposed that Mr. A., who owns a box, has written a letter at his home. Having no stamp, he drops it with two cents into the collection compartment of the box on the inside of his front door. The act of lifting the lid of this compartment to put in the missive automatically raises into view a target on the outside of the door, which bears the word "mail" in big letters. Presently the postman comes along, sees the target displayed, unlocks the compartment from the outside, and takes out the letter money. Very likely he has letters to deliver, in which case he unlocks a lower compartment intended for the reception of mail and drops them in. Nothing appears on the outside of the door but a slot and two keyholes. The occupant of the dwelling has his own keys for opening the compartments from within. If he wants to procure stamps or stamped envelopes, he encloses the money for them in an envelope with an order indicating the number and denominations required. He drops this envelope into the collection compartment, addressed to the carrier, who takes it to the postoffice, where the order is filled. On his next trip he delivers the stamps, two cents stamps being retained and canceled for the service. This system is profitable to the Postoffice Department as well as to the citizens.

### Coin Mexico.

City of Mexico, Nov. 23.—President Diaz made the official announcement today that the Mexican government will restore the import duty on grain December 1, and instructions were immediately given the railway lines in the United States and shippers to have the corn now en route rushed across the border before the duty becomes effective.

Advices received from Nuevo Laredo and Piedras Negras state that there has been a great rush of grain shipments in the republic through those two ports during the last few days and another blockade is threatened on the Mexican National and Mexican Central. Reliable estimates place the amounts of

corn shipped from the United States into Mexican during the temporary suspension of the duty at 4,225,000 bushels.

### A Funny Arrangement.

There is a town in the north of Yorkshire, says an exchange, to which a peculiar omnibus runs. The peculiarity is that first, second and third class passengers are carried by it. A gentleman, getting in, saw this fact announced at the opposite end of the 'bus. Wondering how this could be, he waited patiently to see. In a short time they arrived at the bottom of a hill. The 'bus stopped and the guard shouted out: "First-class passengers keep your seats. See second-class passengers get out and walk. Third-class passengers get out and push."

### In Russian Prisons.

London, Nov. 23.—Advices received here from St. Petersburg show that according to statistics just made public there are 950,000 persons imprisoned in 875 jails in Russia. Ninety per cent of the prisoners are men. The prisons were built to hold only 750,000 persons, and an idea of their crowded condition can be obtained.

### WIT AND HUMOR.

May: Mamma, don't Christmas never change its name? Mamma: No, dear. Why? May: Well, I'd think it would get awful tired of always being called Mary.—Inter Ocean.

Miss Bacon: Oh, it is such fun to hang up one's stocking. What do you expect to get in yours? Miss Lakeside: Well, a piano for one thing.—Inter Ocean.

In the Tavern: What a plague it is to be a patient. My doctor tells me I must drink more wine than beer. I have just had four mugs of beer; consequently, I must still drink at least five bottles of wine.—Fliegende Blätter.

Mrs. Hayseed after talking for a quarter of an hour and getting no answer: "Thar ye set, jest chewin' an' chewin' with yer mouth always so full of terbacker yer can't say a word. Mr. Hayseed: Marlar, I wish you'd learn terchew terbacker.—Life.

A Chicago Irishman who enjoyed a dinner with his friend remarked with a rich old brogue emphasizing his thankfulness: "Ah, Charley, there are few people in the city of Chicago who have got such a good dinner as this—thank God!—Texas Siftings.

Doctor: Why, how is this, my dear sir? You sent me a letter stating you had been attacked by measles, and I find you suffering from rheumatism. Patient: Well, you see, Doctor, it is like this; there wasn't a soul in the house that knew how to spell rheumatism.—Harper's Bazar.

Ex Queen Natalie of Serbia is building herself a very beautiful chateau on her property near Bitchinoff.